



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

Creating a sporting habit for life

Paul Sexton
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

2 October 2014

Our Ref: E/SC/2014/36882/S

Dear Paul,

App Ref: S/1372/14/FL
Site: Howe Close Sports Ground, Whitehouse Lane, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0LF
Proposal: Demolition of the existing pavilion and development of a new sports pavilion, two fenced and flood lit artificial turf pitches, car, coach and cycle parking and associated landscaping and access improvements for Anglia Ruskin University

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the revised plans for the above application (your letter dated 17 September 2014 refers).

Summary: Sport England now supports the application as it meets exception E5 of our playing fields policy, subject to conditions relating to community use, final agreement of technical specification and hours of use.

Sport England originally made representations on this application by letter dated 6 August 2014, when we objected to the detail of the proposed artificial pitches, as the proposed 3G football pitch did not meet the current FA technical guidance.

The applicant has submitted revised plans which make the following revisions to this scheme:

- Revised layout of pitches and parking arrangements (specifically the increase in size of the proposed 3G pitch to 100m x 64m to meet revised FA technical guidance).
- Updated noise assessment.
- Updated lighting plans.
- Updated flood risk assessment.
- Swept path analysis drawings.

I have consulted the relevant NGB's on the revised plans, and they have made the following comments:

Football Association (FA) – support the project in principle, now that the 3G artificial pitch is the full FA recommended size. They do comment, however, that the technical specification could be altered in terms of goal recesses and markings to make the pitch more suitable for mini-soccer and 9 v 9 junior football. These issues do not affect the planning merits of the case as they only relate to detailed design/layout details for the new facility, but the applicant may wish to consider incorporating the suggested revisions into the built scheme (if planning approved).

England Hockey (EH) - no objection, support the proposed scheme.

The revised scheme thus provides two artificial pitches which broadly meet NGB/Sport England technical specifications for such facilities. The site will also provide two grass football pitches.

In strategic terms there is no existing Playing Pitch Strategy for Cambridge/South Cambs to inform the decision making process, though one is currently in production and should be completed in early 2015. Sport England did an assessment of AGP provision in Cambridge, using national data, in 2014 which highlighted a lack of 3G pitches in the Cambridge area. Overall unmet demand was calculated at 1.5 pitches in Cambridge and 0.9 pitches in South Cambs. Pitches in Cambridge were operating at 100% capacity, whilst in South Cambs the figure was 91%.

The above figures indicate a general need for more AGP provision in the wider Cambridge area, and a more pressing need for 3G provision to meet the need for specific football facilities. It is therefore considered that this proposal can help to meet this need provided community access to the facilities is secured.

It is also considered that the proposed new pavilion/changing room block broadly meets Sport England technical guidance, therefore no objection is raised to this element of the scheme. It should be noted that the changing rooms will serve the rugby pitches to the south-west of them as well as the artificial and grass pitches on the main site.

The proposals will offer enhanced potential for the site to be used for wider community use in addition to university use. It is therefore considered that any planning consent should be subject of a planning condition requiring a community use agreement (CUA) to be signed. The applicant has indicated a willingness to accept such a condition.

With regard to hours of use, Sport England normally requests that floodlit community sports facilities should be available for use until 10pm at peak times (weekday



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3. Notwithstanding the details included within the application, the final specification for the 3G artificial pitch, including recess design, fencing and pitch marking shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to work commencing on site. Thereafter the approved scheme shall be implemented.

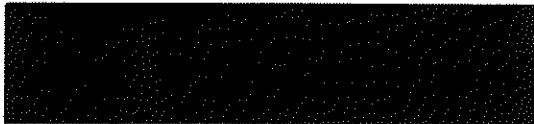
*Reason: To ensure the facility is built to latest technical standards published by the FA/Sport England, in the interests of recreational provision and to accord with development plan policy ***

If you wish to amend the wording of the conditions or use another mechanism in lieu of the condition(s), please discuss the details with the undersigned. Sport England does not object to amendments to conditions, provided they achieve the same outcome and we are involved in any amendments.

The absence of an objection to this application in the context of the Town and Country Planning Acts, does not in any way commit Sport England's or any National Governing Body of Sport's support for any related application for grants funding.

If you would like any further information or advice please contact the undersigned at the address below.

Yours sincerely,



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evenings) with reduced hours at weekends. Such hours should only be reduced if there are strong residential amenity reasons for this course of action.

In policy terms, in this instance, Sport England is now satisfied that the proposal meets exception E5 of the above policy, in that the proposal is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility (ies), where the benefit to the development of sport would outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of playing field.

This being the case, Sport England considers that these new facilities can make a positive contribution to sport in Cambridge for both university and local community. We therefore wish to **support** this application, subject to the following condition(s) being attached to the decision notice (if the Council are minded to approve the application):

1. Unless otherwise agreed in advance and in writing by the Local Planning Authority [after consultation with Sport England], the artificial pitches] and its associated sports lighting shall not be used outside the hours of:

(a) 8 a.m and 10 p.m Monday to Friday;

(b) 8 a.m and 8 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays.

*Reason: To balance illuminating the artificial pitches for maximum use with the interest of amenity and sustainability, and to accord with Development Plan Policy **.*

2. Use of the development shall not commence until a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to the two proposed artificial pitches on this site and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-university users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review, and anything else which the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England considers necessary in order to secure the effective community use of the facilities. The development shall not be used at any time other than in strict compliance with the approved agreement."

*Reason: To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facility/facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Development Plan Policy **.*

Informative: Guidance on preparing Community Use Agreements is available from Sport England www.sportengland.org.

Paul Sexton
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambs CB23 6EA

6 August 2014

Our Ref: E/SC/2014/36882/S

Dear Paul,

App Ref: S/1372/14/FL
Site: Howe Close Sports Ground, Whitehouse Lane, Girton,
Cambridge CB3 0LF
Proposal: Demolition of the existing pavilion and development of a new
sports pavilion, two fenced and flood lit artificial turf pitches,
car, coach and cycle parking and associated landscaping and
access improvements for Anglia Ruskin University

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Summary: Sport England supports the principle of enhancing the sports facilities on this site, but wishes to object with regard to the details submitted, particularly with regard to the proposed football artificial grass pitch (AGP).

It is understood that the site forms part of, or constitutes a playing field as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 2184)

The consultation is therefore statutory and Sport England has considered the application in the light of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular Par 74) and its policy to protect playing fields, 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England (see link below).

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/development-management/planning-applications/playing-field-land/>

Essentially Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of, all/part of a playing field, unless one of 5 exceptions applies:

Sport England Policy	
Summary of Exceptions	
E1	An assessment has demonstrated that there is an excess of playing fields in the catchment and the site has no special significance for sport
E2	The Development is ancillary to the principal use of the playing field and does not affect the quantity/quality of pitches
E3	The Development only affects land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and the would lead to no loss of ability to use/size of playing pitch
E4	Playing field lost would be replaced, equivalent or better in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility
E5	The proposed development is for an indoor/outdoor sports facility of sufficient benefit to sport to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of playing field

The Proposal

The proposal relates to the construction of two floodlit artificial sports pitches and a new pavilion at the above sports ground. One pitch will have a short pile suitable for hockey use, whilst one will have a longer '3G' pile suitable for football. The site has been used as a playing field since 1967, with a small pavilion added in 1972, which is now not fit for purpose to serve this site. The site usually contains four senior grass football pitches, but should planning consent be granted for the artificial pitches the number of grass pitches will be reduced to two.

The submitted documents indicate that the new facilities, particularly the artificial pitches, will be made available for community use with evening use proposed until 2200 hrs.

In strategic terms Cambridge City Council and South Cambs District Council have recently commissioned a Playing Pitch Strategy which will assess pitch provision (including artificial pitches) across the two districts. However, outputs from this study are unlikely to be available for another few months so will not feed into the decision making process for this application.

Sport England use the Facilities Planning Model (FPM) to assess supply and demand for sports facilities. Outputs for 2014 in relation to AGP provision indicate unmet demand in Cambridge equating to 1.53 pitches and unmet demand in South Cambs equating to 0.99 pitches. Existing pitches are operating at 100% of capacity in Cambridge and 93.5% of capacity in South Cambs, with significant cross border movements to use facilities in both districts. There is therefore a strong case to support additional AGP Provision in the wider Cambridge area

Sport England has also consulted with the relevant National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGB's) with regard to the proposals, and has received the following comments:

England Hockey

England Hockey have not been involved in the project but support the proposal as it will provide a new floodlit hockey pitch in an area that is experiencing high demand for hockey, causing capacity issues at existing facilities. The design of the pitch and pavilion are considered suitable for hockey uses. The new football pitch will also help to free up capacity at existing sand-based pitches in the area.

Football Association

The FA has not been involved in the development of this project and FA funding is unlikely as the facility will predominantly be used by the University. The FA would wish to see community use of facilities on this site developed. The FA have concerns regarding the details shown as the AGP is under-sized (the pitch should be 100m x 64m not including run-off/recess areas) and cannot be used for competitive football. The grass pitches are also not to FA recommended sizes for senior football (100m x 64m). For this reason the FA do not support this proposal. In strategic terms the FA considers that the most pressing demand for this type of facility is within villages outside Cambridge. No objection to the proposed pavilion though eight changing rooms to serve four pitches appears to be a little excessive.

In considering the views of the NGB's above, Sport England are generally supportive of the principle of this development as the provision of two new floodlit all-weather pitches should help to meet existing unmet demand for such pitches in the local area, especially if evening/weekend community use is secured.

However, we share FA concerns that the design/layout of the proposals fail to meet NGB/Sport England technical guidelines, in particular:

- The new 3G pitch (for football) does not meet minimum size requirements to allow competitive matches to take place (further guidance can be obtained from FA publication 'The FA Guide to 3G Football Turf Pitch Design Principles and Layouts').
- The remaining grass football pitches do not meet FA recommended size for senior football (100m x 64m)

In light of the above, Sport England **objects** to the proposal because is not considered to accord with any of the exceptions in Sport England's playing fields policy, as the proposed football artificial pitch does not meet FA technical standards for such a pitch, therefore reducing its value for University and wider community use.

We would request that further consideration is given to amending the plans to ensure that the facilities on this site can meet NGB requirements as discussed above.



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Should there be a particular rationale for the facilities being provided as set out on the submitted plans, Sport England would be grateful to receive this from the applicants and we will reconsider our recommendation.

Should your Council be minded to grant planning permission for the development whilst an objection is in place from Sport England, then in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, and the National Planning Policy Guidance the application should be referred to the secretary of State via the National Planning Casework Unit.

If you would like any further information or advice or should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact the undersigned at the address below.

Yours sincerely,



Philip Raiswell
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Tel. 0207 273 1824
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